

# Decision Making and Strategic Management: an Appraisal of The #Endsars Protest in Nigeria

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**Abstract:** The study examined strategic management and decision making in Nigeria with an appraisal of #ENDSARS protest in perspective. Theoretically, the study evaluated the impact of strategic management on the decisions taken by both the State and the Protesters on the conflict. Adopting secondary data and content analysis as methods of data collection and analysis and human resource-based theory as a theoretical framework, the study observed that good strategic management was not employed by both partings in managing the conflict and recommended that decision makers should be transformational and strategic in making decisions. It also recommended that the state should create jobs for the army of unemployed youths, and improve the condition of service and welfare of the Nigeria Police, amongst others.

**Key words:** Strategic Management, Decision Making, Nigeria Police Force, Special Anti-Robbery Squad, Protesters, Government.

## I. INTRODUCTION

According to Maleka (2014, p.4), strategic management has become an attractive management tool to reformers, and instills accountability with regards to the organizational management. With the present trend of global activities and operations, strategic management is the drive that ensures that organizations use the right arsenal that would enable them become efficient in their day-to-day operations. Strategic managers view the fact that market dynamics have created challenges for public organizations. With the emergence of the global economy, advances in technology, increased societal demands, and the need to provide more social services with fewer resources, strategic management brings to bear a widespread desire for increased organizational scrutiny that has increased the pressure for change.

The success of an organization largely depends on decisions made by managers. Strategic management identifies and describes methods required to be carried out by managers so as to achieve better performance and a competitive advantage for the organization. It is a bundle of decisions and acts which a manager undertakes and which decides the result of the firm's performance (Pishkari, 2017, p.108). "Every manager, regardless of the nature of the organization he/she belongs to, needs to design a comprehensive plan of action, articulate it and direct it towards organizational activity to accomplish a

task. By doing so, a series of decisions are involved (Nura and Osman, 2012, p.296)."

Decision making on the other hand is the series options, out of which, one or few is chosen, used and implemented for a particular course of action. According to Schoemaker and Russo (2013, p. 1), decision-making is the process whereby an individual, group, or organization reaches conclusions about what future actions to pursue given a set of objectives and limit some available resources. A good manager makes decisions that impact positively on the organization. The groundwork for any decision is indeed a clear statement of objectives; leadership traits; ability to illuminate the meaning for the objectives and capability to measure the cost and benefit of different alternatives as well as the effectiveness of the decisions (Nura and Osman, 2012, p.296).

Decision making becomes efficient and effective if it is rooted in strategic management. A good manager makes decisions within the strategic context. Çelik, Güngör, Özkul and Tuna (2016) observe that leaders(managers) who have leadership styles make strategic decisions aimed at innovation and change basic business strategies, intervene in conflict and risk taking. Elkhdr (2019) explained that many case studies show that strategic decisions mainly affect the long-run business performance that is directly linked with its objectives. Normally, they are decided by the top management, and generally, they involve high risk, but still, effective strategic decision-making is quite fruitful. It is specifically true for the current business era when leaders and managers have to make their businesses survive and grow in the changing environments. They do this by continuously accepting and adapting the changing business scenarios. They have to maintain pace with the changing business world for gaining a significant competitive advantage. Managers in charge of strategic decision-making are capable of providing only satisfactory solutions to problems (Vasilescu, 2011, p.104). According to Alhawamdeh and Alsmairat (2019, p.95), a successful strategic decision making enables an organization to maintain competitive position, align internal operations with external environment and survive threats and challenges, while conversely, because of their magnitude, a single, poorly made strategic decision can lead to the demise

of an organization and result in corporate embarrassment, large economic losses for stakeholders or even bankruptcy. A typical example of this is the #ENDSARS protest in Nigeria.

Policing is one of the most complex job all over the world (Ogbette, Idam and Kareem, 2018), this is because their sole responsibility is to protect lives and properties. But there are some Nigerians that have had negative impact of the brutal actions of the police. According to Aborisade and Obileye (2018), police brutality involves torture, interrogative technique and other wanton abuses of human rights.

The Nigerian citizens are rough handled, mishandled and brutalized in various ways through; beating, indiscriminate shooting, maiming and killing, and the use unnecessary restrains such as handcuffs and leg chains, unnecessary use of firearms against suspects and innocent members of the public, torture of suspects in order to forcefully excerpt confession and extortion of gratification (Abiodun, Oloyede, Ademola, Abah and Kehinde, 2020, p.50).

There has been a series of efforts to reform SARS over the years; however none has worked so far. The Department has been disbanded several times by the government, yet they have always found their way back into existence, unleashing more havoc on the Nigerian society. The Amnesty International continues to document unlawful killings and extra-judicial executions in the context of the Armed Force, including the SARs. There are doubts on the integrity of the government towards how they have been handling SARS. Decisions made so far by the government on SARS have still not yielded any positive results. There are also doubts about the decisions by Nigerians to protest as it seen as an avenue for hoodlums to hijack and create mayhem in the society. It is based on this lacuna that our intellectual curiosity was spurred to examine if the strategic reasoning was applied in decision making towards the #ENDSAS protest in Nigeria.

## II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study adopted the human resource-based theory as its theoretical framework. In every organization, humans are one of the major factors because they run the day-to-day operations. They are also the most difficult to manage and utilize. Humans are also influenced by series of factors, especially factors that affect their well-being and survival. Omalaja and Eruola (2011), note that human resource-based theory emphasizes the importance of the human element in the process of strategy development of organizations.

Nigeria as a country is managed by some humans known as leaders working in the toga of government, who rule, control and influences the citizens. Any law and order made by these leaders will have a great impact on their subordinates. If the legislations are not strategically made, it would have a rub-off effect on the citizens, and the impact may be conflicts such as riots, strike, lock-downs, blockage, etc.

This theory suits this study because the entire military and para-military institutions in Nigeria are under the control of

the President (Commander-in-Chief of Armed Forces). The President is also the number one leader in Nigeria, hence, every citizens of Nigeria are his subordinates and whatever decisions he makes concerning the affairs of the country has a great impact on every citizen in the country. As the Commander – in – Chief of the Armed Forces, he gives the last command on the subject relating to the use of the military to fight an aggressor(s).

It should be noted that both the Police and the Protesters are all human beings, and decisions from any part thereof, may impact the others, therefore, because all are stakeholders in the Nigeria Project. The human resource-based theory recognizes the importance of the various stake-holders and the relations between them. According to Koch and Kok (1999) these stakeholders form the dominant coalition. The values and attitudes of the members of this coalition are some of the factors that influence the management of the human resources.

## III. CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

### *Strategic management*

Strategic Management is a process which includes environmental analysis of the organization by the top managers for the purpose of strategy formulation and the plan of strategy implementation and controlling (Athapaththu, 2016). Strategic management is a collection of the ongoing activities of strategic analysis, strategy creation, implementation and monitoring. It systematically organizes the resources in aligning with the vision, mission and strategy throughout the organization. It prepares the organization for the future by knowing the exact steps to implement strategic plans. It is a process and a path guiding actions all over the organization (Athapaththu, 2016, p.126). According to Sammut-Bonnici (2015, p.1), strategic management is the process of evaluation, planning, and implementation designed to maintain or improve competitive advantage. The process of evaluation is concerned with the external and internal environments. Planning involves developing business models, corporate direction, competitive tactics, international strategy, acquisitions, and collaborative action. The implementation phase requires leadership to build the appropriate organizational structure, develop management culture, control the strategic processes, and steer the organization through corporate governance.

Demir (2018, p.16) identified seven dimensions of strategic management.

- (1) Leadership
- (2) Planning and Executing
- (3) Processes and Tools
- (4) Structure and Model
- (5) People and Culture
- (6) Performance Management
- (7) Innovation

The dimensions above are very essential elements in policy formulation and implementations as well as decision making in both the public and private entities as well as in social institutions.

#### *Decision making*

Nura and Osman (2012) see decision making as an act of identifying and ably selecting among an array of alternatives based on the inclination. A manager is only called a manager if he/she is capable of making effective decisions. It is all about conscious choice of an alternative course of action (Nura and Osman, 2012, p.297). Decision making is the process of selecting a particular course of action from other various alternatives that should be executed. Ki, Park and Kim (2017) stated that decision-making often determines the overall direction of an organization and significantly affects the quality and effectiveness of organizational performance. Decision-making itself demonstrates complicated organizational issues, thus, demanding a great deal of organizational resources. Russo (2013, p.1) define decision-making as the process whereby an individual, group or organization reaches conclusions about what future actions to pursue given a set of objectives and limits on available resources.

Decision making depicts a process of adequately reducing uncertainty and doubt about alternatives to allow a reasonable choice to be made from within and among them (Nura and Osman, 2012, p.297). According to Ki *et al* (2017, p.7) decision-making measure can be used to gather benchmark data regarding the current levels of an organization's strategic-decision quality as well as to conduct periodic checks to measure improvement in the quality of such decision-making quality. It can serve as a diagnostic barometer which will allow the top managers or executive personnel in an organization to assess areas that are weak and in need of attention in order to make strategic decision-making more effective. Again, Ki *et al* (2017) identified eight measures of decision making as follows:

- Decision quality: Decision quality is related with the overall quality of the decision relative to its intent.
- Decision routines: This measures an executable capability for repeated performance in any context that has been learned by an organization in response to selective pressures.
- Procedural rationality: This measures the extent to which the decision process involves the collection of information relevant to the decision and reliance upon analysis of this information in making the choice.
- Understanding: Understanding is often measured as shared understanding about ends and means.
- Decision commitment: Represents more than simple agreement. It requires the active cooperation of the team and understanding and commitment to the decision.

- Procedural justice: This measures the fairness of the processes by which decisions are made and the fairness of the treatment of individuals involved in the process.
- Cognitive conflict: This measures the extent to which team members perceive the existence of task-based differences and disagreements.
- Affective conflict: This measures the extent to which team members perceive the existence of person-based differences.

#### *Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS)*

Abiodun *et al* (2020) described the Nigerian Police Force (NPF) as a Federal Institution. The Nigeria Police personnel perform personal protection and guard duties. The NPF was established under Section 214 of the 1999 Constitution. The Police Act (1990) describes the function, structure and operation of the Force. The Act was originally drafted in 1943, and was reviewed in 1967 (Police Act Cap, 2004). The President and Commander-In-Chief of Armed Forces in Nigeria holds operational control of the Force and appoints the Inspector-General of Police (IGP), who is responsible for the command of the Police subject to his directive for public safety and maintenance of public order. In the same vein, the administrative, financial and logistics management of the Nigeria Police falls under the authority of the Federal Ministry of Police Affairs.

The Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) is a dreaded anti-crime unit of the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) founded in 1992 by Simeon Danladi Midenda, a retired Commissioner of Police who added the word "Special" to the already existing Anti-Robbery Squad which turned out to be Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) (Ogbette *et al*, 2018, p.181). According to Spokesman of the Police Force, Jimoh Moshood, SARS is one of the 14 units under the Nigeria Police Criminal Investigation and Intelligence Department which was created to arrest, investigate and prosecute people involved in violent crimes such as armed robberies, murders, kidnappings, hired assassinations and other forms of extreme criminality. Anti-Robbery as a modus operandi of the Nigeria Police Force for combating armed robbery has been as old as the Police Force itself. As a unit also, anti-robbery had always existed in all Criminal Investigation Departments at Force Headquarters, Zonal and State Command levels (Ogbette *et al*, 2018, p.181). In the past years till date, torture has remained widespread across Police units, but especially in those of SARS (Amnesty International, 2016).

#### IV. CAUSAL-FACTORS FOR POLICE BRUTALITY IN NIGERIA

According to the Amnesty International (2002) one of the challenges of the civilian government which came to power in Nigeria in 1999, was to ensure the respect for and protection of human rights which was in breach during the preceding military era. This challenge has coincided with a wave of

crime and violence that has spread throughout the Nation till date. Brutality is one of several forms of misconduct which involves undue violence by security officers, especially, the Police on citizens in a society. This misdemeanor exists in many states and territories in the global system, most especially, in the developing societies. Police brutality refers to the intentional use of excessive force directed towards a state's citizens by the Police officers or security agents (Abiodun *et al*, 2020, p.52).

Empirical studies have shown that torture and other forms of violent abuse could have enduring negative effects on both survivors and perpetrators, and is ineffective for obtaining reliable information in interrogation. In spite of state prohibitions against torture and custodial misconduct by the Police, torture has been reported as being commonly used in police custodies across Nigeria, which is a major reason behind deaths in custody (Aborisade and Obileye, 2018, p.2).

The following factors enhance Police brutality in Nigeria:

#### *Unprofessionalism of the Nigerian Police Officers*

There are some officers in the Nigeria Police/SARS that are not professional in the discharge of their duties, 70 percent of them are undertrained, incompetent and unqualified. The country is therefore saddled with a very large number of unqualified, under-trained and ill-equipped officers and men, many of whom wear the respected uniform of the Force in bad shape. The police are today stuck with undesirable workforce. The Police training facilities are overstretched and under-resourced (Abiodun *et al*, 2020, p.57).

#### *Influence of Politics*

In Nigeria, policing is, in all ramifications, interwoven with politics. There are some officers that are politically deployed to achieve the selfish goals of the politicians; to rig election, arrest and clamp their oppositions in jail among others (Abiodun *et al*, 2020, p.58). Most of the officers are deployed to guide the Politicians, rather than the generality of the people.

#### *Deficient Guidance on the Nigeria Police Act*

Unfortunately, the Police Act does not provide any guidance on the exercise of these duties and the scope of the powers of the Police remains largely ambiguous. This glaring gap in the law has led to a situation where armed officers are not aware of the scope of the lawful exercise of power and consequently violate constitutional provisions and fundamental human rights of the citizens; they are expected to protect pursuant to their law enforcement duties (Abiodun *et al*, 2020, p.58).

#### *Lack of Adequate Resources and Poor Working Conditions*

It is observed that the Nigeria Police have limited capacity for scientific and intelligence investigations. Police barracks are in bad shapes and ill – equipped and lack the resources to investigate numerous complex crimes that require specialized skills. Apart from the bad eggs in the

Force, there are inadequate working tools. In some Nigeria Police stations, there is no database for fingerprints, systematic forensic investigation, or sufficient budget for investigations. The forensic capacity is absolutely poor; there are only two forensic laboratory facilities in Nigeria and limited numbers of forensic police staff. Due to lack of funding and resources for security matters, the Nigeria Police is currently struggling to fulfill its statutory responsibilities. It is also established that inefficiency and corruption in the Nigeria Police are usually connected to poor wages/salaries and difficult working conditions of operatives. Officers do not have enough basic security equipment; bullet-proof vests, sophisticated arms and handcuffs. These are some of the reasons they are unable to apprehend armed robbers and insurgents in the country (Abiodun *et al*, 2020, p.59).

#### *Uncontrolled Anger/Emotions on the Part of SARS Operatives*

Police work requires psychological balance of feeling and emotional, because the job involves “emotional labour”. This is necessary in crime investigation and the interrogation of suspects. It is observed that most Police officers do not control both their feelings and emotions during crime investigations and they tend to unleash terror on the suspects. This is a recurring decimal in Police investigation in Nigeria. In the process, this lack of professionalism leads to death or permanent maiming of suspects. Even apart from the bravery and physical strength, police profession requires communication and human relations skills that are often undervalued by police managers and officers (Abiodun *et al*, 2020, p.59).

#### *Corruption and Bribery*

There is absolute corruption in the Nigerian Police Force. They not only collect bribes, but extorts monies from various people, including commercial bus, taxi, motorcycle drivers. The SARS operatives frequently storm at different spots/locations such as cinemas, night/party clubs, and cyber cafes in cities to unlawfully effect arrests in order to raise some monies whenever they are in “dire need of money for their weekends.” Several cases of bribery and corruption are usually reported in Nigeria, and this is common in some instances while criminals and armed robbers go out for their operations both in the day and nocturnal period. Anytime these “men of the underworld” are on rampage for their operations, the SARS operatives only collect bribes from them and let them go. In Nigeria, it is alleged that arms and weapons are being proliferated with the support of some of the corrupt SARS operatives (Abiodun *et al*, 2020, p.59).

#### *Use of illicit drugs/drinking of much alcohol by Officers while on Duty*

It is no more news that most Police Officers saddled with the responsibility to maintain laws and orders and protecting lives and properties are often alleged to be daily engaged in the act of smoking of “Indian hem”, heroine and

cannabis and as well drinking of alcohol in both hidden and public places. They later retire to places where alcoholic drinks, beers and Indian hems are sold to “enjoy” themselves. After taking all these, they become very “high” as this makes them to misbehave the more in public places (Abiodun *et al*, 2020, p.59).

#### *Culpability on the part of the Nigerian Government*

Culpability on the part of the Nigerian government could be seen from the government’s attitude to many unresolved cases of unlawful and extra judicial killings, violence, poor Police condition of service, and general lawlessness in the country. But it is unfortunate that the government has refused to demonstrate genuine commitment to ending impunity of Police brutality in the country as failure to ensure their accountability and ensure redress for their wrong doings denies the victims of justice (Abiodun *et al*, 2020, p.60).

#### *Poor implementation of the Budget/Appropriation Law*

Financial appropriation or funding for the Nigeria Police is almost seven percent of the annual national budget estimate but the lion’s share of this is spent on wages and salaries of staff. In recent years, paltry 6% of the budget are allocated for capital expenditure, such as equipment and training facilities, while almost 70% of the overhead and capital expenditures are spent at the Force headquarters. This resulted in making State Commands to rely on State and Local government authorities to finance their operations; the sub national governments often donate vehicles, fuel, allowances and communication gadgets to the security personnel within their domain.

#### *Inadequate equipment, working materials and use of outmoded equipment*

Police officers in most stations have always complained of lack of basic working materials such as statement forms, bail bonds, case jackets, police diaries and stationery. The Nigeria Police has also failed to keep pace with time in terms of sophistication of crime in modern times. There have been proven cases of criminals possessing more sophisticated weapons than the Nigeria police. Hence, the cases of insufficient supply of arms and ammunition, bullet proof vests, vehicles and other security gadgets by the State has become a recurring decimal. Often times, Policemen die at the hands of criminal elements and bandits due to their over reliance on out dated and obsolete equipments. The lack of modern crime monitoring, intelligence and surveillance gadgets for the tracking down of criminals and their hideouts has, therefore, continued to affect the Police effective performance (Alozie, 2019, p.9).

#### *Poor Remuneration and Condition of Service*

The police service is among the least remunerated sectors in Nigeria, despite the risky nature of the service. Poor condition of service has remained a major drive for some unprofessional conduct often witnessed among the rank and file of the

Nigeria Police. Over the years, the reward system in the force is nothing to write home about. For instance, before the 100 percent salary increase by late President Umaru Yar’Adua’s administration, the average take home pay of a Police Constable was N10,000.00, which was composed of N5,000.00 as salary, lodging, N2,000.00 and others, N3,000.00. Within the same period, a Corporal earned about N13,000.00 and after the increase earned between, N27,000.00 and N28,000.00. Similarly, a Sergeant earned N15,000.00 and with the increase, such a staff goes home with about N31,000.00. Following the salary increase, inspectors salary rose to N55,000.00. At the officer level, Assistant Superintendent of Police earned between, N80,000.00 to N85,000.00 with the increase in salary. Other affected officers were Superintendents of Police and their Deputies, whose salaries rose to between, N90,000.00 and N100,000.00 respectively. Poor remuneration in the Police Force has for long continued to attract public outcry in view of the fact that it had led to low morale among their members in addition to contributing to their indulging in some unethical conduct or behaviour. This was one of the requests outlined by the #ENDSARS Protester. “Apart from poor remuneration, issues such as stagnation of some officers in a particular position; favouritism and tribalism, parochialism and poor accommodation have all affected the performance of members of the Force (Alozie, 2019, p.8).”

### V. GOVERNMENT RESPONSES TO POLICE BRUTALITY IN NIGERIA

The 4<sup>th</sup> Republic of Nigeria commenced on 29<sup>th</sup> May, 2009 with Chief Olusegun Obasanjo as President. There was a lot of optimism on how to restore and reinvent the dreams of the founding fathers that struggled for the State’s independence. Key to Nigeria was guaranteeing security, which is critical for their safety, and the Nigerian Police is pivotal in this regards. Naankiel, Christopher and Olofu (2011) observe that “in view of the several police brutality, gross misconduct and the factors aiding these menace, several administrations had in the past set up committees to reform or re-organize the Police Force.” Consequently, from the Obasanjo (civilian) administration to Buhari’s current administration (1999 to 2020), there has been several reform targeted at repositioning the Police to become more effective.

Presidential Committee on Police Reform, which was constituted in 2006 by former President, Olusegun Obasanjo produced a report. The Report of the Committee was approved by the government, but never made public and likely not implemented.

Another Committee was set up by late President Umoru Yar’adua in 2008. Recommendation from the Committee was made public; part of which was the sum of N2.8 trillion will be spent over 5 years to equip and train Police officers, increase their salaries and revamp the various arms of the Police Force. The recommendation of the Committee was

swept under carpet owing to the various intrigues surrounding the health and eventual death of President Yar'adua.

A similar effort was made by the successor of late President Umaru Musa Yar'adua, Dr. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan. Like his predecessor, Jonathan's Committee was headed by a retired Deputy Inspector General of Police, Mr. Parry Osayande. The Committee delivered its report to the Presidency in August 2012. According to the Premium Times newspaper (2014) former President Goodluck Jonathan said that the Federal Government would spend N1.5 trillion in the next five years to reform the Police Force. However, the administration failed to honour its promise and only about effectively.

Many felt President Buhari would handle national outfits like the Police Force with an iron will. Several stakeholders and civil pressure groups have called on the Buhari's administration to implement the Dikko Committee recommendations from 2008 to no avail. The call to scrap SARS and reform the Police had not been taken seriously by the Nigerian government (Abiodun *et al.*, 2020). In 2016, the Inspector General of Police (IGP) I. K. Idris announced broad reforms to correct SARS Units' use of excessive force and failure to follow due process. In December 2017, when the agitation to disband SARS gained more momentum, the then IGP Ibrahim Idris again announced measures to reorganize the outfit. Again in September 2018, Idris ordered SARS to stop the random searching of people's phones immediately (Premium Times, 2018). He promised a comprehensive reform both in terms of ethics, mode of operation, nomenclature, orientation, function delineation, command and control, as well as weaponry and accountability mechanism of the outfit.

In August 14, 2018, the Vice-President (VP) of Nigeria, Yemi Osibanjo made a pronouncement on SARS reform. The announcement held that SARS had been changed to Federal-SARS, even though the department had always been addressed as F-SARS in official Police statement and documents (Premium Times, 2018). Yet, the impact of the recommendations within the Police Force has not produced the desired results. The President Muhammadu Buhari's administration has also made efforts to improve Police welfare and technical expertise. On April 2019, the President assented the Police Trust Fund Act, which focuses on training of Police Officers, procurement of operational equipment, maintenance of Police stations as well as improvement in the welfare and well being of the Police Force. Also, on September 17, 2020, President Muhammadu Buhari signed into law the Nigeria Police Act, 2020. The new law provides for a more effective and well-organized Police Force driven by the principles of transparency and accountability in its operations and management of its resources, amongst others (WANEP, 2020). In February 2020, the Inspector General of Police (IGP), Mr. Mohammed Adamu ordered the disbandment of the satellite offices of SARS. He pointed out that dissolving SARS offices were part of an ongoing

reorganization. Yet the SARS officers continued to act with impunity, committing armed robberies, rapes, other acts of torture and extrajudicial killings which resulted to online outrage on the activities of SARS officers.

In October 2020, an online outrage led to the ban of Federal Special Anti-Robbery Squad (FSARS) by the IGP. The ban of FSARS comes against the backdrop of the findings by the leadership of the Force that a few personnel of the Tactical Squads hide under this guise to perpetrate all forms of illegality, contrary to the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) Code of Conduct and Rules of Engagement establishing the squads. However, despite the announcement by the IGP, young Nigerians still went into the streets to unleash their fury and anger against SARS operatives. The reactions from the protesters was because government has failed to satisfy completely stop the SARS. Besides ENDSARS demand, the demonstrators increased their demands to include widespread reforms of human rights abuses committed by security forces of all stripes and pervasive government corruption and they also called for institutional reforms. In response to the #EndSARS movement, the government announced it had already disbanded the SARS unit. The government further announced the creation of SWAT (Special Weapons and Tactics) to replace the SARS unit (Guardian Newspaper, 2020).

The Federal government directed each of the country's 36 states to set up an inquiry on the incidence; consequently, on Tuesday's 27<sup>th</sup> October 2020, Lagos State kick-started the process by setting up a 11-member panel, which included two representatives of the protesters. The panel was given six months to submit its report. Among the terms of reference were:

- Listen and take evidence from all victims or the families of victims of SARS abuse;
- determine if compensation should be payable;
- determine if officers should be recommended for prosecution; and
- make recommendations on how to make sure there is no more abuse.

The Police reform policy done so far by both past and present administration is in the right direction, but Nigerians are not satisfied because they have not seen, neither are they experiencing positive result from the reform policies. Many Nigerians are still assaulted, robbed, brutalized, killed, and falsely accused and detained by some elements in the Nigeria's Police, leading to the protest.

## VI. THE #ENDSARS PROTEST IN NIGERIA – A CRITIQUE

Police brutality triggered a mass protest in Nigeria. According to Ujene and Orji-Egwu (2018, p.4), Nigeria and Nigerians on January 1, 2017, woke up to witness an uproar of the masses against the perceived brutality of the anti-robbery unit of the Nigeria police force. In the same year 2017, Nigerians

launched a social media campaign with the hash tag #EndSARS to document abuse and extortion by SARS officers and demand the total overhaul and abolition of the Unit. The nationwide demonstrations against Police officers of SARS continue to gain momentum across States (WANEP, 2020). The campaigners moved from social media using the #EndSARS hashtag to organized, peaceful protests in Abuja, Lagos, Ibadan, Osun, Benin, Ughelli, Warri, Ilorin, Ogbomosho, Owerri, Jos, Kaduna, Calabar and other Nigerian cities and states, threatening to continue if the government refused to disband the force (WANEP, 2020).

According Vanguard Newspaper (2020) the protestors made a five points demand to be met by the Federal Government of Nigeria. Topping the list was the immediate release of all the persons arrested during the protests as well as justice and compensation for all who died through police brutality in Nigeria. Next to the above is an independent body to be set up within 10 days to investigate and prosecute all reports of police misconduct. Also, the psychological evaluation and retraining of SARS operatives before they are deployed to any other police unit. Finally, the protesters requested an increase in the salaries of officers in the Nigerian police.

It is important to note that the #ENDSARS protest was a means some Nigerians used to unleash their anger against not only the brutality of the Nigerian Police, but poor governance which has led to excruciating poverty that caused hardship in the country. Apart from the police/SARS brutality, more reasons why Nigerian youths protested were:

High rate of inflation at 13.2%, which is the highest in 29 months (Business Day newspaper, 2020). The level of these increases will compound the poverty level among Nigerians.

The huge debts that are currently at more than 31 trillion Naira (Business Day newspaper, 2020) and will grow to 38.68 trillion Naira in 2021 (Business Day newspaper, 2020).

The number of jobless people in Nigeria increased to over 21 million in the second quarter of 2020 (Business Day newspaper, 2020). This has increased poverty and exacerbated crime as noticed during the Protests. Insecurity is currently on the high rate like never before.

According to Business Day newspaper (2020), total casualties from insecurity in Nigeria took an alarming rate turn in June (2020) with at least 731 innocent citizens killed in violent attacks. The problem of *Boko Haram* insurgency, violent communal clashes, kidnappings, and insensate criminality predated this administration, the insecurity situation has deepened and widened and worsened under the current government in the last five years. Hence, lots of Nigerians now live in fear.

The Protesters still believed that banning SARS and introducing SWAT was like an old wine in new bottle. The protesters no longer trust the government because of the many contradictions emanating from the government and the Police authorities.

WANEP (2020, p.1) contended that “since the commencement of a national protest against SARS brutalities and extra-judicial killings in Nigeria, the country has continue to record series of protests across States. The protest has resulted in violence that has caused the death of 92 people, 87 injuries and destruction of properties and livelihoods.” Suspected hoodlums and cult gangs have exploited the protests to increase their criminal activities as recorded in Osun, Kwara, Edo, Ondo, Lagos, Abuja-FCT, Gombe, Kano, Delta, Oyo, Abia, Ogun, Ekiti and Plateau States. Also, incidents of shoot-outs between security operatives and suspected hoodlums who have exploited the insecurity created by the protest to carry out illegal activities including jailbreak, robbery, extortion and physical assaults of commuters/motorists, arson and rape were recorded. WANEP (2020) held that cases of Police clamp down on protesters in Lagos, Rivers and Abuja-FCT as well as violent attacks on Police officers and other security operatives by suspected hoodlums in Oyo, Ekiti, Ogun, Lagos, Edo States. There are also alleged claims by protesters of state sponsorship of thugs to cause chaos and disrupt peaceful demonstrations in Lagos, Edo and Abuja-FCT. Between October 17<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020. Indeed, 78 people were reported dead (including 6 police officers) with over 73 others injured in Police shootings, attack by hoodlums and road accidents in the affected States. Out of the 78 deaths, 4 deaths were accident-related during the ENDSARS protest. WANEP (2020) further explained that a total of 16 Police stations were vandalized and destroyed by hoodlums in the guise of ENDSARS protesters of in Edo (6), Lagos(4), Oyo (1), Ekiti (1), Abia (2), Osun(1) and Abuja-FCT(1).

In addition, several public and private facilities including three commercial banks, Local Government Secretariat, Nigerian Ports Authority, Lagos State Television (LTV), the Palace of the Oba of Lagos State and over 100 Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) in Lagos State; a warehouse belonging to the Nigeria Customs Service (NCS) in Edo State; and shopping malls were damaged in Abuja, Lagos, and Osun States respectively. Ekiti and Edo States also recorded cases of gang-rape of 6 female victims by hoodlums during the protest. Accident-related incidents during the protest were recorded at Delta, Ekiti and Lagos States, which caused 4 persons death with several others injured (WANEP, 2020).

Guardian Newspaper, 2020 notes that to ensure legitimacy for the protest, more than 200,000 Nigerians signed the online petition set up by Mr. Silas Ojo to the United Kingdom (UK) parliament to impose sanctions on all those behind the Lekki shootings. These sanctions range from visa bans to assets freezing as contained in an e-petition upon which the parliament’s Monday debate was based. The said petition has already been discussed in the United Kingdom parliament on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2020 and they are now looking towards imposing direct sanctions on Nigeria government officials, who played a role in violating human rights during the end SARS protest. Similarly, the protesters further reported the

Lekki shootings to the International Criminal Court (ICC) which is conducting a preliminary examination in the #ENDSARS protests in Nigeria including the alleged killing of peaceful protesters by soldiers.

The actions of the Protesters clearly shows that they have lost hope in the government and the decisions so far made by the government on the Police brutality have not been favorable to them, which is why the protesters are now involving external organizations for help.

#### VII. THE IMPACT OF THE ENDSARS PROTEST TO NIGERIA

The police brutality, government decision making and the protesters decision making, all have consequences on the Nigerian society. Every government that values her image will prevent protest because it gives a bad image in the International environment. The consequences of the violence are as follows:

1. Unrest threatens investors to lose confidence in the country. Major supermarket franchises like Spar, Shoprite and similar foreign-owned businesses were badly affected by the protests; this has negative connotations for Nigeria's external image.
2. There is also job loss; currently, Nigeria has an unemployment rate of 27.1% as of August 2020. Small business owners who employ thousands of workers have had to let most of their employees go until a time they can bounce back. More so, the informal sectors in Nigeria is the greatest employer of labour, and their businesses suffered a great deal.
3. Similarly, there is a lack of trust of the political office holders by the citizenry. The #EndSARS protest is a clear evidence that there is a wide gap between the government and young Nigerians who still feel disgruntled over the way and manner the government has handled the call to end Police brutality before the protest.
4. The protest caused financial strain on states, especially, the State's infrastructure. According to the Lagos Chamber of Commerce and Industry, an estimated N700bn was lost in economic value by Nigeria, but some other economic experts put the loss beyond a trillion Naira (Guardian newspaper, 2020).
5. Businesses with no insurance cover may never return. Though some businesses will rely on their insurance companies to bounce back, not all small businesses are insured.
6. Banks that loaned money to affected businesses would also take some hits as most loans may have to be written off, where businesses affected by the crisis do not bounce back.
7. Inflation rate may likely skyrocket as the nation strives to steer away from a looming recession owing

to dwindling income of the country. Nigeria's inflation rate currently stands at 13.71%.

#### VIII. CONCLUSION

Strategic management is a guide in decision making and its effectiveness depends on leadership directions. Where decision making is not guided by strategic management, it yields negative results like the #ENDSARS protest in Nigeria. Lots of Nigerian citizens have been brutalized, maimed, killed, robbed, extorted, falsely accused and detained by the Police, especially, the SARS Unit. This study showed that there have been several efforts by the Government to reform the Police in order to stop the menace, but these efforts yielded no positive results that led to the #EndSARS protest. The protest was further hyped by other activities that Nigerians felt are not favorable to them, such as inflation, insecurity, unemployment and so on. The Protesters were shot by the Nigeria army in Lekki, Lagos State; this led to the hijacked of the protest by hoodlums that caused mayhem on the Nigerian State. The Nigeria government in REACTION banned SARS and set up SWAT. They further freeze the accounts of some of the end SARS promoters and stopped some others from travelling. The Protesters are currently seeking help from external organizations like the UK parliament and ICC. The study showed the absence of strategic management in handling #ENDSARS protest in Nigeria.

#### IX. RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommends the following:

1. Nigeria needs a charismatic leader with transformational leadership style that would adopt strategic management in decision making. A transformational leader combines strategic leadership style like democratic, transactional and even autocratic when necessary in managing the state and the people. Such a leader was needed to stem down hostilities during the #ENDSARS protest.
2. The state should create jobs for the army of the unemployed or underemployed youths, women and even men. Social security schemes should be provided for the unemployed.
3. Shooting the Protesters was not a strategic decision by the Government, the army does not have a business in quelling domestic violence, that is the role of the Police; consequently, the President should be on top of his game by acting within the framework of his office.
4. Government should support the youths to become entrepreneurs. Towards achieving this, the Executive is urged to liaise with the National Assembly to enact an Act that would provide for the establishment of the Youth Enterprenourship Fund, which would support willing and active youths with funds to start – up businesses on inject in existing businesses.



5. The government should make efforts towards improving the condition of service and welfare members of the Nigeria Police. The on-going reforms should be continued and more efforts should be made towards improving the conditions of the services of these officers.

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